



# Biblio-Notes

Issued by the Literatures in English

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that may not seem very "literary" at the moment. At the University of Oregon, we recently received a donation to support historical fiction. I'm hoping that this will be a fun, high-use collection that will boost circulation rates and also make our collection more inclusive.

I'm not a historical fiction fan, so I tackled this genre by doing what a librarian does best: I looked it up. Our public library had a copy of Sarah Johnson's very handy *Historical Fiction: A Guide to the Genre* (Libraries Unlimited, 2005), which gives thorough annotations of several thousand novels, as well as clear indications of which should be in a core collection. Anyone who reads in this genre knows it's very broad and that it resists definition, but by making some arbitrary decisions to steer clear of the outer reaches of romance, western, and fantasy, I compiled a manageable "start

committee meetings. The Membership Forum will include a presentation and discussion of the use of Weblogs in literary librarianship. Everyone is encouraged to attend and participate. If you are considering committee participation, you are welcome to sit in during the All Committee meetings to see which

available on the Web site and will be announced on LES-L. Visit <http://www.ala.org/acrl/les> or contact Section officers if you have specific questions.

We'll be looking forward to working with you.

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like *The Devil in the White City*, *The Kitchen Boy*, and *A Floating Life: The Adventures of Li Po*. I'm buying Ken Follett, Leon Uris, and even Jimmy Carter. (The former President wrote a novel about the Revolutionary war, titled *The Hornet's Nest*.) I've come across several books I'd probably like to read. I'm also getting a chance to familiarize myself with a genre I've never spent much time on, which will no doubt help me on a reference question

## Genre

Recently, LES members have been talking a lot about genre. We've discussed who's collecting gay and lesbian pulp fiction, how we find funds for graphic novels, and whether academic libraries are (or should be) in the business of preserving the kind of literature

great way to broaden our collection and give our users a personal stake in their library. At the moment we're starting with historical



Applicants are encouraged to consult the Library staff by mail or phone regarding the collections. Inquiries may be addressed to SWC/SCL staff or to the Formby Research Fellowship Committee. Email or fax submissions are acceptable.

Address application or inquiries to: Diane Warner, Chair Formby Library Research Fellowships, Southwest Collection/Special Collections Library MS 41041, Texas Tech University, Lubbock, TX 79409-1041, Fax: 806-742-0496 Phone: 806-742-3749 Email: [Diane.Warner@ttu.edu](mailto:Diane.Warner@ttu.edu)

### Three Positions Open in LES

LES is currently accepting applications for three section positions. These roles are excellent for people who like to be involved in professional associations and feel they can make an impact. We are looking for applicants who could make a two or three-year commitment (see individual job descriptions) and could attend ALA conferences for training and to participate in LES meetings. All three positions are ex officio members of both of the Executive Committee and the Publications Committee, so Midwinter and Annual conference attendance is required. If you can meet these expectations and are interested in the position, please send a short (one or two paragraphs) statement of interest to Susanna Van Sant, the Chair of the Literatures in English Section (e-mail: [svansant@umd.edu](mailto:svansant@umd.edu)).

We would like to have selections identified by the end of the year.

### Webmaster

The Literatures in English Section is in need of a Webmaster for its site (<http://www.ala.org/acrl/les>). Our current Webmaster, David Bell, who has served in this capacity for three years, is moving on to new projects. We thank him for his work.

The LES Webmaster is primarily responsible for maintaining the functionality of the site and for implementing new initiatives and updates generated by the committees. The Webmaster would be encouraged to pursue his or her own proposals for the LES site in consultation with the Executive Committee.

We are looking for someone who could make a two-year commitment. If you have any questions about the nature of the position or its duties, please address them to David Bell ([cfdsb@eiu.edu](mailto:cfdsb@eiu.edu)).

In your statement, please tell us why you are interested in the position, your qualifications for it and describe any relevant experience you may have. Feel free to send URL's to any Web site work you have done. (Please note that ALA provides training in the use of its content management system. Prior experience with such a system is not required.)

This is a terrific opportunity to get involved with the Section.

### LES-L Moderator

The Literatures in English Section is seeking a volunteer to be the "moderator" for LES-L, the Literatures in English Section's electronic listserve. The position is for a two-year term. The current moderator is David Bell, who has served in this capacity for three years. We thank him for his work.



panel, these students don't want strategies: they want sources. They want librarians to bring to their attention the definitive database, the stellar journal, the strange and wonderful reference book, and the author whose works are obscure but electrifying. I found it to be a peculiarly retro look at librarianship, where making reader's guides and bibliographies would seem a more valuable use of library instruction time than investigating how to evaluate websites. Now, we most likely do both when working with them, but these students find one precious and one an uneconomical use of time. Though we may have a different assessment of their information fluency, this is what they think.

The other interesting thought which emerged was that the panel felt we should do more work on our websites and with vendors to make the interfaces and usability of our electronic products simple and efficient. As the college senior explained, "Don't think of it as the students being lazy; think of us as wanting to be efficient. We have a lot of things to do and we want to be able to get in and get the information out of each database as efficiently as possible." According to William Strauss and Neil Howe's book *Millennials Rising* (New York: Vintage Books, 2000), the Millennials have led highly structured, scheduled lives and are used to multi-tasking all the time. America's obsession with time and squeezing more in has affected the lives of these students from childhood on.

While I think their point is well-taken to work with vendors and make *data gathering* as seamless as possible, I posed as follow-up to this panel that perhaps research is not supposed to be simple and efficient. Perhaps it is supposed to be circuitous and inefficient and time-consuming and laborious - so that the time and path required to meet a text facilitate both serendipity and discovery. The recent *Chronicle* article "Stacks' Appeal" by Thomas Benton describes well that occasion when, looking for a book, another different but perfect one falls on your head. Yes, I want to be able to search MLA and ABELL and a host of literature websites easily and simply, but do I believe the process of research in literature should be easy and simple? No more easy than learning to write well, no simpler than reading *Ulysses* or Akhmatova or Neruda. While believing that we should continue to investigate and shape our libraries with the

learning styles and characteristics of our incoming students in mind, I also wonder whether research has begun to denote data gathering and just how simple this process should be.

*\*Thanks to Dr. Dan Friedman, director of Appalachian State University's Freshman Seminar program, for his invaluable information about the students on our campuses today.*

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## Editing BiblioNotes

It did not seem appropriate to put this in the editor's job description earlier in this newsletter but I would like to say that editing the newsletter is not the fearsome job many would envision it to be. I keep a bibliotes folder in my email and twice a year issue a call

signing up for something that requires attendance at six consecutive ALA meetings sounds daunting, rest assured that I have missed a few (maybe more, the consequence of having a child with a late June birthday and a long memory for maternal absences) and no one has hunted me down and flogged me for it yet. Nor have I been fired or fined. If you have any interest at all in being BiblioNotes editor I strongly encourage you to apply. Feel

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